

REMARKS

Claims 1-75 are all the claims currently pending in this Application. Claims 17-22 and 27-75 stand withdrawn. Claims 1-16 and 23-26 are all the claims currently under consideration.

Formalities

In this Office Action the Examiner acknowledges Applicant's claims to foreign priority and the receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents.

The Examiner also returns signed and initialed copies of the substitute Forms 1449 submitted with the Information Disclosure Statements of November 20, 2003 and May 2, 2005.

Drawings

The drawings stand objected to as allegedly failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that the drawings fail to show "a deflection amount of the developer carrier at an end portion of the developer carrier in a longitudinal direction thereof is smaller than a deflection amount at a center of the developer carrier in the longitudinal direction." The Examiner notes that "figures 5-7 may show a deflection amount at the end *larger* than the deflection at the center."

However, Applicant submits that Figures 5A and 5B indeed show that a deflection amount at a center of a developer carrier is larger than a deflection amount at an end. As shown in Figure 5A and discussed at pages 76-77 of the specification, a deflection amount (in other words an amount of bending of the developer carrier) at a center of the roller 1c is larger than a

deflection amount le at an end of the roller. However, the *interval* (in other words a gap between the developer carrier and the photosensitive body) at a center of the roller Lc is smaller than an *interval* Le at an end of the roller.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the Figures be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Specification

The Abstract of the Disclosure stands objected to for containing legal phraseology. With the present Amendment, Applicant amends the Abstract of the Disclosure to remove this objectionable language.

Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to the Specification be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claim Rejections — §102(b)

Claims 1-15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Noda (U.S. Patent No. 5,510,878). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Regarding independent claims 1, 4, and 13-15, Applicant submits that Noda fails to disclose or suggest “wherein an end of the solid portion, ... is located closer to the center of the developer carrier than an edge of the opposing region.” (Claim 1, see also claims 4 and 13 -15) In other words, with reference to Figures 8-10, an end of the solid portion 512 (the end of solid portion 512 is located at position B in Figure 10) is closer to the longitudinal center of the

developer carrier than an end of the opposing region 578 (the end of the opposing region 578 is located at position A in Figure 10). That is, for example, the end of the solid portion 512 is inserted far enough into the hollow portion that the end of the solid portion has advanced toward the longitudinal center to position B, which is past position A which is the end of the opposing region.

Regarding this limitation, the Examiner refers to Figure 29 of Noda and asserts that Noda discloses that the sleeve gear 12k is attached to an end of the hollow developing sleeve 12d as claimed in the above-recited limitation of the present invention. However, the sleeve gear 12k of Noda is located outside of the toner layer forming area, therefore, an end of the sleeve gear can't be closer to a longitudinal center than an end of the toner layer forming area.

Therefore, Applicant submits that Noda fails to anticipate claims 1, 4, and 13-15 and that claims 1-12 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependence on claims 1 and 4. Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1-14 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claim Rejections — §103(a)

Claims 16 and 23-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Noda, in view of Kurokawa (JP .6308816). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant submits that Kurokawa fails to remedy the above-discussed deficiencies of Noda, and therefore, claims 16 and 23-26 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependence on claims 1, 4, 14, and 15.

Further, Applicant submits that neither Noda nor Kurokawa teaches or suggests wherein a deflection amount of the developer carrier at an end portion of the developer carrier... is smaller than a deflection amount at a center of the developer carrier.” (claim 16, see also claims 23-26). In other words, as discussed above, neither reference teaches or suggests that a bending of the developer carrier at an end portion of the developer carrier is smaller than a bending of the developer carrier at a center of the developer carrier.

Regarding this limitation, the Examiner refers to Kurokawa. However, there is no teaching or suggestion of bending in Kurokawa. Further, as shown in Figure 3 to the extent that the radial thickness of Kurokawa causes a different spacing between the developing roller and the photosensitive drum, the spacing is opposite that created in the present invention by the claimed deflection amount of the developer carrier. Therefore, Kurokawa teaches the opposite curve as recited in claim 16 of the present invention.

Therefore, Applicant submits that claims 16 and 23-26 are patentable over any reasonable combination of the cited references and respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 16 and 23-26 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

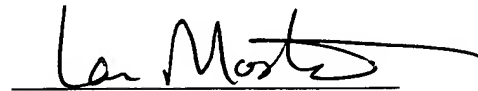
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No. 10/717,185

Q78858

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Moskowitz", written over a horizontal line.

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